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FIELD DIARY

Mr. Vernon Bailey
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Period, April 5-8 to 1929

Virginia
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April 5, 1929

Left Washington D.C. for
Hot Springs, Virginia to study
the deer problem for the State
Game Department.

On C & O. Ry. through
Culpepper, Charlottesville,
Staunton, and Covington,
then up to Hot Springs and by
auto across to Warm Springs
where we arrived at 12
midnight and were taken
to Hotel Warm Springs owned by
the Game warden Wm. A. Hite
and District warden R. L. Seay

Along route from Washington
to Stanton the red bud was in
full flower until we crossed the
first range of mountains.
Apple blossoms were just coming
out and the dogwood were a
gumily white. Peach orchards
were past perishing and the
trees showed much green new
foliage.

At Stanton it was too dark
to see except a tiny bit of white
to the apple orchards.

April 6, At Warm Springs Inn
we had a comfortable night
and woke up in a beautiful mountain
valley with steep hills running
around 500 or 600 feet above
us, a wooded country with
little farmed land in the valleys.

The woods are mostly bare with
a little green on willows and elms.
Amelanchier in blossom but no
red bud or dogwood out. A few little
peach trees in flower but apple trees
not yet out.

All transition zone except on
cold slopes and gulches where
hemlock & Rhododendron indicate
Canadian. Only a trace of Arctic
on low warm slopes where Sycamore,
Tulip,

Birds Warm Springs, Va.

April 6 -

Mallard	a few
Bonaparte	com
Collins	" few
Cuckoo	1 heard
Dryobates	"
Sphyrapicus	" sun, com
Colaptes	com.
Corvus americanus	1 - com
Grosbeak, purple,	com
Strenella	"
Cardinalis	2, a few
Pipilo	1, 1, com.
Poocetes	com
Juncos	obs
Spizella breweri	com
Wilospeza	"
Requites californica	2, 3,
Carolina wren	3, others
Penthestes	2

Parus inornatus	1
Wren philadelphus?	2, 1,
Merula nigronotata	com
Sialia sialis	"
Phoebe	One, nesting
Starling	2 at Monterey April 7, com
English sparrow	com " "
Cardinal	1
Kingfisher	3
Cowbirds	4
Redwings	2
Mourning doves	3
Bobwhite	1
Sparrow hawk	2
Turkey buzzards	4

Trees & bushes, Warm Springs, Virginia

April 6 -

<i>Pinus strobus</i>		abn
" <i>pungens</i>		"
" <i>rigida</i>		"
" <i>rostrata</i> echinata		"
" <i>virginiana</i>		" low down
<i>Zelkova caroliniana</i>		" on N.E. slopes.

Bucaneva rubra

- " *alba*
- " *placata* *digitalis*
- " *prinoides*
- " *semirecta* *nana*
- " Turkey?
- " *coccinea*,

Acer saccharum

" *saccharinum*

" *rubrum*

" *spreatum*

" *peninsulare*

Ulmus americana

verreauxii *pubescens*

Hicoria alba, shagbark

Carya ovata, shellbark

" *laciniosa*

" *cordifolia*, pignut

Juglans alba *cinerascens*

Castanea dentata,

Nyssa sylvatica, Bladegum

Robinia pseudoacacia

Ostrya virginiana

Pyrus, *Morus nigra*, white poplar

Citrus,

Prunus serotina, black cherry

Fraxinus

Salix 3.

Platynus, a little low down

Fagus " " "

Auricularia americana

" *carolinensis*

Sarcopras a little low down

Liquidambar .. -

Cornus florida .. -

Aleuris villosa
Bengoin a little
Viburnum luteum
Ilex
Hepaticas
Lanceolata? *Menziesia pilosa*
Vaccinium
Rubus
Vitis
Smilax
Beech a little low down.
Kalmia latifolia
Rhododendron maximum
Agave - a little
Rhus hispida
" *glaabra*
Sambucus
Sarracenia, a little
Black birch
Basswood

Gaultheria
Ceratodon
Brodroot
Hepaticas
Viola
Cowchip
Tritillium

Mr. Gillett says Warm Springs
is about 2500 feet, his place
is 2200 feet, Bald Mountain
near Hot Springs is 4300 feet
and one other peak 4000 feet.

In AM of April 6 we went to
the game refuge on Rock Creek
ridge ^{north} west of Warm Springs after
6 miles from Warm Springs. It was
about 5000 acres and is partly
fenced.

We found lots of deer tracks
all along the roads and trails and
I estimate tracks of 100 to 200 deer
seen. Mr. Hill estimates 1500
deer to Bath Co. which seems
to me a conservative estimate.

Bath Co. Va., April 4 - 1929.

Deer	1500
Fox squirrel	co
Gray squirrel	"
Black squirrel	a few
Rat squirrel	1
Chipping Woodchuck	
Mink	a few
Prairie dogs	
Marmots	co
"	
Squirrels	co
"	
Porcupines	co
Short-tail Skunks	1 April 7.
Prairie Dogs	a few
Porcupines	"
Hawks	"
Magpies	"
Wrens	very scarce
Wiseek	a few

In P.M. Went north 10 miles to place of M. J. Ed. Gillett on Rocky Run, a branch of Judson River that joins the James further down.

Found a fine wooden house with an interesting couple, who took the best of care of us with all the comforts of home, including a big fireplace and lots of wood.

Saw lots of wildcat tracks and signs, the signs made up of wool and deer hair and rabbit fur. There are probably 200 and maybe 400 bobcats in the Co. and if these take 10 deer each in a year it would take about all.

There are lots of gray foxes too and a few wild turkeys and lots of ruffed grouse! Here is a big problem.

Otter - a few long ago
Lynx trapped, com. primitively
Lynx " 50 caught last year⁽¹⁹²⁷⁾
Bobcat " "
Wolves a few red pts.

April 7 Sunday, at Gillitts

2 deer in yard
Eat laurel, Rhododendron, blackberry
Benzoin, with hazel, alder, red osier,
Red elm, -

Refrused willow, speanose.

Mr. Gillitt says a year ago last fall
(1927) the trappers caught 50 gray foxes
in this valley, along the Jackson River
Up Jackson River to head of
Monterey at 3300 feet. county seat of
Highland Co.

Narrow valley with good little farms,
blue grass and stock. Mountains both sides
Mainly Transition zone.

Canadians on cold slopes as
shown by hemlock + Rhododendron, white
pine and *Pinus strobus*.

From Monterey road to top of ridge
at about 3700 feet where we look down
over Croft Bottoms, a fine light
up farming country.

at west of the valley the main range of the Alleghany Mts.

No green foliage in woods but grass getting well up in open great Kentucky bluegrass country

Lunch at Monterey

Then east to Bull Pasture at Cowpasture valley and over the Stanabock Ridge at W.C. Dowell's battle ground & down to Calfpasture Creek & down valley to Deepfield & thence down to Thompson Creek, thence over Warm Springs Mountain and down to Warm Springs at 6:30 P.M.

Covered about 100 miles over fair roads most quarry.

Very warm and summerlike.

April 8 - Left Wataugaings at
9 AM and came back over the
Neemapings mountain and up
to Lookout fire station, then down
to eastern Thompson Creek,
then over to Cowpasture River
to Blowing Cave near the
Windy Cove Church founded
in 1749, then across Sweet
Run and Lick Run, then
over the top of the ridge and
down to Millboro on the
railroad.

In the lowest part of Cowpasture
River, sand more red bed, big
tuliptrees and a strong trace
of Carolinian on warm slopes.

Took train at 3:17 P.M. for
home, due 10:40 P.M.
Very warm and dry. like summer.

Over mountains at Mill斯ars and
then all down grade to big open
farming & orchard valley at Swoope.
Strong element of Carolinian zone on slopes.

Staunton in bottom of valley.
at 1395 feet.

Wameaco, Carolinian zone on
warm slopes.

Afton 1379, top of front range.
all Carolinian below.

Bath & Highland Cos., Pa. April 4-8, 1927

I rough

Bison bison pennsylvanicus.

Buffalo are not remembered by the oldest inhabitants but are well known by tradition in the valleys of Bullpasture, Cowpasture and Calfpasture creeks which are said to owe their names to these animals a hundred years ago or more.

The country is ~~too~~ mostly too rough and steep and heavily timbered and probably there were never many buffaloes anywhere in this high region, nor could they possibly last long before the sicks of the early white settlers.

Cervus canadensis

Elk were known to be all through this region but they must have disappeared at an early day for Mr. Pitt's whose father was a hunter here nearly a hundred years ago never heard of any elk being seen or killed by any of the old men he knows.

The old Windy Creek Church on Cowpasture River two miles north of Millboro was built in 1749 which shows how far back the settlements go in these hills.

The country is fine for elk but most of their time would be spent in the valley fields and orchards and gardens and they could not be controlled or tolerated in any numbers.

Odocoileus virginianus

Doe are still fairly well represented in Bath and Highland Counties but not in half the numbers there should be. In Bath Co. Mr. Wm. A. Hite, the local woodsman very familiar with conditions, estimates 1500 deer and from the tracks and signs seen I should say this was a very conservative estimate.

In Highland Co. there may be as many but I should say certainly 1000 deer would be a safe guess.

Food and range are equally abundant and favorable for deer in the two counties which seem to be considered the best in the state for deer. They are largely mountainous

2, and lie between 2000 and 4000 feet in elevation. They are made up of various mountain ranges with narrow stream valleys between and the valley bottoms all in grass and clover but the ridges, hills and mountains are forest, mainly second growth from cutting and burning in years past. All of the nuclear land is ideal deer pasture said to be about 82 percent of the country.

Mostly deer & fawn tracks run on the Back Creek game refuge 10 miles south of Warm Springs but the old bucks are said to keep along the crests of the ridges most of the time.

Deer food is abundant and ideal for twice and probably four times the number of deer at present on the range and not more than half of the good range is occupied at all.

3. At least 6 species of oaks bear acorns, some of them every year, and generally in such abundance that acorns still lie on the ground in spring. The chestnuts still bear a lot of fruits but all are dying out. There are lots of hazel nuts and small seeds & berries for deer while the herbage on almost every kind of bush and shrub and tree sprout seems inexhaustable. The great abundance of blueberry bushes of at least 3 or 4 species, sassafrass, maple of 5 species, chestnut, willow, alder, wintergreen, arbutus, laurel and Rhododendron afford favorite haunts for winter, while the clovers and vetches are abundant summer food as well as the leaves and flowers and buds of a great number of shrubs.

4. At Mr. Gillett's place on Jackson River he has a buck and doe found in and always hungry because there is nothing green in their yard except grass which they will not touch. They were eager for the leaves of laurel and Rhododendron, the young leaves of blackberry, flowers of spirea, buds of maple and elder, but did not care for sycamore or mulberry twigs, nor yet in leaf.

White clover grows abundantly on all old clearings or roads or fields not in use and a little red clover here and there. These are especially sought for when night by the does and fawns. Dandelions are generally scarce where there are any deer and so is the wild violet, but in places the woods are full of two species of it.

5. In no place could we find a trace of over grazing even in winter, and food supply need not be considered for many years.

Enemies are a serious menace to deer. In the Back Creek Game Refuge we saw fresh and old tracks of many bobcats and their droppings were seen ~~but~~ in abundance along the trails. In many cases these droppings contained deer hair, in others sheep's wool and in others rabbit fur.

From evidence noted I should say Bath Co. has 100 to 200 bobcats, and it would be strange if these did not average 10 does or fawns apiece during the year. This is the most serious and immediate deer problem.

4. There are lots of gray foxes and a very few red foxes that may get a few fawns in summer but they are of much greater danger to wild turkeys and upland grouse & rabbits.

The sexes of deer need not cause any worry for 2 or 3 years yet as there have been but 3 years of hunting bucks only and the bachelors have taken more does than the hunters have bucks.

Hunting should be discontinued as much as possible to allow increase for spreading out and restocking. By all means restrict it to bucks for two years yet, then consider springing on any kind of deer. Limit the season and allow but one buck to a hunter.

7. Moving deer from places where abundant to places where there are few or none should be done as fast as possible. Trapping and moving deer without injuring or frightening them should be a practical part of game management.

Licenses - More funds are clearly needed for increasing the game and making better hunting and these funds might be obtained by increasing amount of resident license. This could well be done by dividing the license on deer, turkeys, small game, fishing and trapping. The non resident license of 25 dollars seems high enough to keep out undesirable hunters.

Introduction of deer is not necessary or desirable as the native stock is better adapted

8. Do we carry or release does
any from outside, but if any
are introduced they should be
the larger does from northern
New York or Michigan or Minnesota.
The one doe in Mr. Gillett's yard
is evidently the small, southern
does, probably from North or
South Carolina stock.

Native stock has many advantages
over any from outside and there
is abundance here to replenish
the whole range if well managed.

Sylvilagus transitionis

This species of cottontail is undoubtedly older than the big dark brown one high up and in the brushy woods is undoubtedly of this species. Signs were seen all through the areas along the crests of ridges clear up to the first lookout on Warm Springs mountain. It is a distinct species and does not mix with the common cottontail of the valley country.

Sylvilagus nuturus

Cottontails are common in all of the valleys and are a valuable game animal. Their greatest value is in their abundance and availability for every boy to hunt and get the training he needs for larger game and better marksmanship. The boy who can hit the head of a rabbit with his twenty two rifle will not cripple his deer when he grows up and he will not shoot at a guegar and kill another hunter.

Sciurus niger neglectus

Fax squirrels are scarce but generally distributed over this region. There are not one where there should be a dozen to utilize the ample food supply of chestnuts, butternuts, hickory nuts, and bushels of acorns which still lie on the ground with sound sweet meats from last years crop. These squirrels are the finest small game animals we have and should be protected in ample numbers to stock this range. Hunters are their only enemies and they should be curbed.

The old hollow trees of the forest afford ideal homes and covers and the mountains should be a ~~panacea~~ for these splendid big squirrels.

Sciurus hudsonicus logaux

A few red squirrels are found over the mountains but so scarce that we have seen but one on the tops over two counties. The great abundance of pines and hemlock cones would furnish food for many of these squirrels besides all the nuts and acorns they could eat and they are one of the attractive forms of wild life of which this region is distressingly poor.

Zapus carolinensis nucanus

We saw several gray squirrels and they are said to be fairly common and a few blades among them. This would indicate the larger northern form rather than the Carolina gray squirrel and a better game animal.

There is ample food of the choicest nuts and acorns for a much larger squirrel population and the numerous old hollow trees afford the�iest houses and breeding places. If the full value of such small game were half appreciated a more vigorous effort to protect these animals and keep their numbers up to the limit would be made.

Tamias striatus -

Chipmunks are common but not often seen. They are interesting little animals and generally harmless but are probably kept scarce by the numbers of wild house-cats running all through the woods.

Marmota monax

A few woodchucks were seen in some of the meadows and on the hillsides and occasionally a fresh hollow in the woods but in no place are the animals numerous enough to do any real damage and they do add an attractive element of wild life to the country that is of real value.

Neotoma floridana pennsylvanica

Woodrats are found in many of the caves, among the rocks and rarely around buildings. I saw tracks in the cave on Thompson Creek.

Rattus norvegicus

House rats are common and troublesome around buildings generally all through the mountainous country.

Peromyscus leucopus

These are probably the common woods mice of the region.

Musotomus pennsylvanicus

Runways and burrows very fond under grass in old fields but some of the mice taken or identified.

Musotomus pictus scalptoides

A few burrows and ridges may have been of this species.

Micromys chrotaceum

Some of the ^{microtus} signs
may have been of this yellow
moused mouse but I could
get no evidence if so.
Still they should be searched
for.

Erethizon dabbenei

I found no evidences of these
little red backed mice but saw
lots of places under the laurel
and Rhododendron and hemlocks
where I am sure I could
catch them.

Lixus ziphurus -

A few muskrats are said
to be found along the rivers and
creek banks in the mountain
valleys and near Staunton I saw
a muskrat sitting in a bunch of
water grass in the Creek.

Panther

Many places still bear the names of Panther ridge or Panthers Rock and Panther Spring, and Mr. Hite says he has heard many stories of panthers hunted and killed, he thinks not later than 50 years ago. He showed me the Panthers Rock near the top a great ridge on the east side of Calipatria Valley. There seems no possibility that any of these big cats remain and it is probably better so.

Lynx rufus rufus
Bobcats are far too numerous
here at the present time, and their
tracks and droppings are seen
along many of the roads
and trails to the mountains.
I should estimate 100 to 200
of bobcats in each of the two
counties. They have ideal cover
and dens in the numerous
caves and hollow cliffs,
and boulders along the edges
and seem to be little hunted
or trapped.

On the Back Creek Game
Ridge we saw numerous
fresh and old tracks and
dozens of droppings along
the trail. Forty of these
were made up entirely by
deer hair, others of sheep
wool and others of cattle hair.

It seems highly probable
that each fully grown boar
kills ten or a dozen does
and sows a year. They are
less likely to kill full grown
~~bucks~~ but are especially
deteriorating to sows in summer.
A good hunter with the
right kind of bait ought
to get most of the boars
in one of these counties in
a year and one winter to pay
his salary of \$100 a month from
cat and fox skins, both of
which should be kept down
to the lowest possible number
to protect both the deer and
wild turkeys. In summer
the pen would be worthless
but soon we afford to let
these animals feed on venison
even for the rest of this summer.

Canis latrans

Wolves were common in these mountains a hundred years ago and a few Mr. H. thinks up to 50 years ago. Fortunately they are all gone but probably our dogs do almost as much harm as the wolves did in early days.

Vulpes fulvus -

A few red foxes are said to be rarely found in these mountains but they are very scarce, which is fortunate for the wild turkeys.

Gray foxes

Gray foxes are said to be common all through the mountains but not so many last year as the year before. Mr. Gillett says about fifty were taken in the valley of the Gauley River in his vicinity in the fall of 1927. At this rate there should have been 500 in Highland County which is considered the best country in Virginia for wild turkeys, a country where Gov. Bland, Lydig, Hughee and other men go to hunt.

It is utterly impossible to maintain wild turkeys under any such conditions and ~~products~~ to attempt it

These gray foxes are easily trapped as muskrats.

They are not cunning and can not resist a properly prepared scent bait.
It is often necessary to catch them all out of a region before any wolves or coyotes can be caught because they insist on getting into a well scented trap before anything else can find it. Our regular coyote bait will get them every time.

These skins are valuable in winter but they should not be allowed to feed on wild turkeys all summer.

Ursus americanus

Black bears are said to be fairly common in a few places in both counties but they are not well distributed nor half appreciated as game animals.

In this great forested area with abundance of acorns and nuts every year, vastly more blueberries, black berries, elderberries, black daws,

thornapple and wild fruit and green plants and roots and bulbs which they like. They are not likely to get the habit of killing stock and if they do they are easily trapped and moved to other places where stock is scarce and other food abundant.

In Pennsylvania the black bear is considered their best

Game animal and the regular
license is charged for hunting
them. They bring many
sportsmen into the State who
would rather get a bear than
any other game at any price
and the extra revenue just
helps to pay for the job shop
and traps killed before a
bear that gets the habit can
be captured and moved.

On the first complaint of
bear killing stock or aarelion
is sent to get him and
in half a day two men can
build and set a log bear trap
lait it with honey and generally
take the bear with them on a
truck the next day.

John J. Slaughterback of
The Game Department at Harrisburg
Pa., can send you a man to do it.

Bear ought to be well protected, not allowed to be hunted with dogs or trapped, to be taken only in a late fall short open season, the deer season generally, and neither young bear nor old females accompanied by young should be killed.

A prime bear skin has considerable value as far or more as a trophy while the meat and oil are greatly appreciated by many.

This is always the spice of possible dangers in killing a bear though if not cornered or wounded there is no more harmless animal in the woods.

Oregon lotus

A few seasons are found over these two counties but they are not very common and evidently are too freely hunted. They are valuable game and fur animals in a region richly supplied with their choicest food, acorns, nuts and berries and a fair abundance should be maintained by regulation of hunting season and bag limit.

Mustela novatoraeensis

Weasels are not very common but probably occurs over all of both countries. They need no control beyond what gets into traps set for other fur animals each year. They do considerable good in keeping down the abundance of mice and small rodents.

Mustela vison

Mink occur along the streams and are a valuable fur market with no need of control beyond the regular trapping season. A careful record should be kept of their abundance and this can best be done by a good license system for all fur trapping and requiring a report on all animals taken.

Lutra canadensis

A few otters follow the streams but Mr. Giblett says he has not known one taken for 3 or 4 years back.

Mephitis mephitis nigra

Skunks are only moderately common but are probably the most common catch of the traps. A trapping license requiring a report on all animals taken would be a great help in keeping track of abundance of each species.

Spilogale

Mr. Giblett tells me there are a few of these little spotted skunks, called Civets,

Peromyscus breweri

Mole runways and hills
are seen in many places
and most probably are of the
hairy tailed mole although
the common mole and
star nosed mole should
both be here.

Olaris brevicauda

Some very smooth holes
in the ground suggest the
short tailed shrew.

Sorex

Several species of small
shrews certainly occur
in the cold wet places but
not two no collecting was
done and more could be identified

Eptesicus fuscus

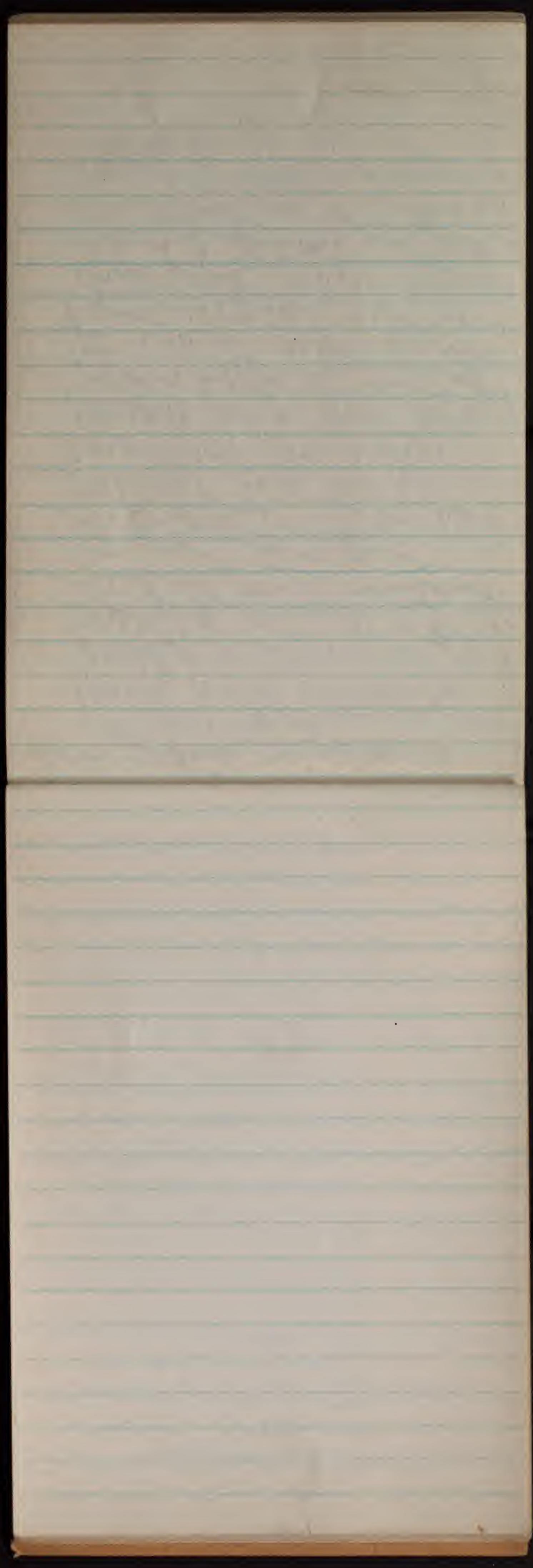
Our bat seen flying about the Warm Springs here on the evening of April 7, appeared to be this species the big brown bat but I could be positive of it.

There are many caves in these two counties and some of them are said to contain many bats.

There should be a dozen or more species here and the caves should be carefully examined as well as the bats collected in evening where seen around the water, buildings or in the woods. They are among the most valuable animals and worthy of careful study.

Didelphis virginiana

A few opossums are found and should be counted as one of the few ~~rearing~~ animals to be studied and monitored in not too great abundance. They have valuable fur and are considered by many people as a great delicacy when properly cooked. Too many such animals however would not be desirable where a good stand of ~~giant~~ wild grass are nesting as they are fond of meat and eggs of ~~any~~ kind.



William Hiltz, Hair Dresser,
R. I. Street, Bucyrus, Va.
J. Ed. Gillett, New Haven

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